

I CLAIM:

- 1 1. A method of processing meat comprising the steps of:
2 a) contacting bodies of meat originally stored at a
3 relatively low temperature with a treating solution;
4 b) agitating said bodies of meat in contact with said
5 treating solution at a predetermined elevated temperature above
6 said low temperature and maintaining said elevated temperature
7 substantially constant while agitating said meat for a period of
8 time sufficient to distribute the treating solution in the meat
9 in at least one first treating vessel;
10 c) thereafter cooling the bodies of meat in at least
11 one second vessel; and
12 d) recovering said bodies of meat in a cooled state
13 below said elevated temperature and substantially dry.

1 2. The method defined in claim 1 wherein said bodies
2 of meat are heated in a further vessel prior to being delivered
3 to said first vessel.

1 3. The method defined in claim 2 wherein said bodies
2 of meat are heated by contact with a solution prior to being
3 delivered to said first vessel.

1 4. The method defined in claim 1 wherein said bodies
2 of meat are heated in contact with said solution in said first
3 vessel.

1 5. The method defined in claim 1 wherein said bodies
2 of meat are transferred from said first vessel to a plurality of
3 said second vessels.

1 6. The method defined in claim 1 wherein said bodies
2 of meat are transferred from said first vessel to said second
3 vessel by a conveyor.

1 7. An apparatus for the treatment of meat comprising:
2 at least one first vessel for agitating bodies of meat
3 in contact with a treating solution at a predetermined elevated
4 temperature and for maintaining said temperature substantially
5 constant while said meat is agitated therein for a period of time
6 sufficient to distribute the treating solution in the meat; and
7 at least one second vessel for receiving bodies of meat
8 from said first vessel for cooling said bodies of meat to a
9 temperature below said elevated temperature.

1 8. The apparatus defined in claim 7 wherein at least
2 said first vessel is a rotary paddle massager or a tumbler.

1 10. The apparatus defined in claim 7 wherein at least
2 one of said vessels has a jacket and said apparatus includes a
3 system for passing a heated or cooled fluid through said jacket.

- 22 -